

KINDERGARTEN IN JERUSALEM.

There are now eleven kindergartens in Jerusalem, with more than one thousand children. Previous to the British occupation there were only four Hebrew kindergartens in the city, two of which belonged to the "Hilfsverein," but when the entire educational system was taken over by the "Vaad Hachinuch" at the beginning of 1918, these schools were also taken over by the Zionist Board of Education. The "Vaad Hachinuch" thereupon established new kindergarten schools in various parts of Jerusalem, which have developed a most useful activity. All the little Sephardim, Mograbim, Bokharans, Ashenazim, and Yemeites, whose parents speak various tongues, hear only one language when they enter school, and in a short time they also begin to speak only the Hebrew language, which they are taught in a suitable manner. Their young lady teachers, almost all of them trained in the Jerusalem Seminary, devote themselves to their task with enthusiasm and love. Songs and games, object lessons, and gymnastics are all taught in Hebrew.

These kindergartens also perform important social, pedagogic, and hygienic purposes. Most of the pupils come from the poorest class, whose health conditions are anything but satisfactory. The schools are carrying on a fight against trachoma, the eye disease from which 50 to 60 per cent of the children are suffering. One of the essential requirements consists

of douches, but so far there are no means to purchase them. The children attend from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon. It would be most desirable to provide the weaker children in the school regularly with milk, but so far it has been possible, thanks to private generosity, to provide them with milk only occasionally.

The method of instruction is a combination of the Froebel and Montessori systems, which will in time give rise to a special national Jewish system. Particular attention is devoted to the celebration of our Jewish festivals. Each festival has its special songs and games of a specifically Palestinian character. There is now a purely Hebrew kindergarten literature and a great number of beautiful songs and poems, whose author, a young poet named Kipnis, has rendered a valuable service to children's education.

During the first half of 1918 seven new kindergartens were opened in Jerusalem. In the south of the town, the Montefiore district, the first new school was opened with three classes and 100 children, mostly Sephardim. Then came the school of the Bokharan quarter, which is attended by children of Bokharans and Yeminites. The next school, and the largest, was opened in the Southwest (Mazkereth Moshe), which has six classes with 160 children, and is furnished with a large play ground and garden. The kindergartens connected with the orthodox Talmud Torah classes are of a special type and are making grati-



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